REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

These remarks are made in response to the Office Action of June 6, 2006 (hereinafter Office Action). As this response is timely filed within the 3-month shortened statutory period, no fee is believed due. However, the Examiner is expressly authorized to charge any deficiencies and credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 50-0951.

In the Office Action, each of the claims were rejected on the basis of new grounds of rejections. Claims 1, 2, 7, and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,483,588 to Eaton, *et al.* (hereinafter Eaton). Claims 3, 4, 9, and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Eaton, in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,415,269 to Dinwoodie (hereinafter Dinwoodie). Claims 5, 6, 11, and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Eaton, in view of Dinwoodie, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,625,271 to O'Malley (hereinafter O'Malley). Claims 13, 14, and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Eaton, in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,894,512 to Zenner (hereinafter Zenner). Claims 15-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Eaton, in view of Zenner, and further in view of Dinwoodie. Claims 17 and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Eaton, in view of Zenner, and Dinwoodie, and further in view of O'Malley.

Applicants have amended independent Claims 1, 7, and 13 to further emphasize certain aspects of the invention. Applicants also have amended dependent Claims 3, 4, 9, 10, 16, 17, and 18 to emphasize certain additional aspects of the invention and to maintain consistency among the claims. Claim 15 has been cancelled.

As discussed herein, the claim amendments are fully supported throughout the Specification. No new matter has been introduced through the claim amendments.

Applicants' Invention

Prior to addressing the cited references, it may be helpful to reiterate certain aspects of Applicants' invention. One embodiment of the invention, typified by Claim 1, as amended, is a method of call conferencing using a voice browser. The method can include establishing a voice browsing session between a calling party and the voice browser. Subsequent to establishing the voice browsing session, an inbound call from an additional party can be received. The method can include determining whether the inbound call is directed to the voice browser for which the voice browsing session has been established, the determination being based upon a calling signal corresponding to the inbound call. (See, e.g., Specification, p. 3, lines 18-22; p. 6, lines 4-7; and p. 9, line 20 – p. 10, line 6.)

Additionally, the method can include determining whether the voice browser is configured to accept inbound calls associated with the calling signal. If the inbound call is directed to the voice browser, and if the voice browser is configured to accept inbound calls associated with the calling signal, the inbound call can be added to the voice browsing session. (See, e.g., Specification, p. 3, line 18-20; p. 6 lines 7-10; and p. 10, lines 7-16.) This step further can include providing a voice communications link between the calling party and the additional party.

The Claims Define Over The Prior Art

As amended, independent Claims 1, 7, and 13 each recite the step of determining whether an inbound call from a party is directed to a voice browser for which a voice browsing session has already been established with another party. Specifically, the determination is based upon a calling signal corresponding to the inbound call. The

claims further recite the step of additionally determining whether the voice browser is configured to accept inbound calls associated with the calling signal. According to Applicants' invention, if it is determined, based upon the calling signal, that the inbound call is directed to the voice browser and that voice browser is configured to accept inbound calls associated with the calling signal, then the inbound call can be admitted into the already-established voice browsing session.

Eaton, which is directed to a teleconferencing system that lacks any type of voice browser, is acknowledged at page 3 of the Office Action to further lack any mechanisms for making these determinations. It is stated, though, that Dinwoodie teaches adding into a remote "auction site" an inbound call provided that the caller "is identified."

Applicants respectfully submit that Dinwoodie's mechanism for admitting identified callers into an "interactive remote auction bidding system" has nothing to do with making the determinations made by Applicants' invention for adding a call to an already-established voice browser session. In particular, Dinwoodie fails to teach or suggest determining based upon a calling signal corresponding to the inbound call whether the inbound call is directed to the particular voice browser for which the voice browsing session has already been established, as expressly recited in the amended independent claims. Moreover, Dinwoodie fails to teach or suggest determining whether the same voice browser is configured to accept inbound calls, again, based on the associated calling signal, as also expressly recited in the amended independent claims.

Dinwoodie nowhere utilizes any type of calling signals. Dinwoodie's admittance of a caller into the auction site is strictly based upon a caller's providing an appropriate "password" and personal identification number (PIN). (See Col. 4, lines 4-7.) Neither the password nor the PIN provided by the caller in Dinwoodie corresponds to a calling signal corresponding to, or otherwise associated with, an inbound call. Instead, the password is a voice or data input sent by the caller in response to a voice prompt "heard"

when the caller calls a "1-800 number" in order to be admitted into the auction site. (Col. 3, line 66 – Col. 4, line 7; see also Col. 2, lines 55-65, and FIG. 1, element 18.)

For Dinwoodie to be in any manner comparable to Applicants' invention, the caller's initial call would have to convey the calling signal that is the basis for determining whether to admit the caller into the auction site. But it does not. The caller's initial call only elicits a voice prompt that requires an affirmative action on the part of the caller, namely, the providing of an appropriate password and PIN. Dinwoodie makes no determination of any kind based upon an inbound call itself. Dinwoodie's determinations are based upon voice or data entries supplied in response to a voice prompt over a 1-800 telephone link. This is fundamentally different from Applicants' invention.

Dinwoodie's procedure of admitting a caller to an auction site is explicitly described as follows, portions of which are cited in the Office Action:

"[P]rior to commencement of the auction, communications paths are established between each remote location 12 and the auction site 14 via network 16. For example, a bidder at remote location 12a places a telephone call to the auction site 14 using a telephone input device 18. A bidder may call a 1-800 telephone number to auction site 14 at step 40, thereby establishing a communications path via link 22a, network 16, and link 28 to receiver/transmitter processor 26. Acknowledgment of the call to the participant at location 12a is made by processor 26 by generating a greeting to the participant and a prompt for the participant's password at step 42. Upon hearing the prompt, the participant inputs a password utilizing input device 18. A decision is made at step 44 by processor 26 to determine whether the password has been correctly input by the participant. If no password has been input, the telephone call is terminated

by processor 26 at step 46. If the proper password has been input and received by processor 26, processor 26 prompts the participant at remote site 12a for a personal identification number (PIN) at step 48. The participant then enters the participant's PIN number through input device 18. Processor 26 then determines at step 50 whether a proper PIN number has been received. If no proper PIN number has been received, the telephone call is terminated at step 52. If the PIN number has been received, processor 26 prompts the participant for the participant's bidder number at step 54. Processor 26 then determines whether a proper bidder number has been input by a participant at step 56. If the bidder number has been entered and accepted, the process continues to step 70 (FIG. 3)." (Col. 3, line 66 – Col. 4, line 38.)

The quoted language makes explicit that in Dinwoodie an inbound call is a bidder's call to a 1-800 number. The inbound call conveys no corresponding or associated signal that can be the basis for determining whether the inbound call is directed to a voice browser for which a voice browsing session has already been established. Firstly, Dinwoodie has no reason for making such a determination since it is apparent that the inbound call is from a caller seeking to be admitted to the auction site. Accordingly, there is no need to determine whether the inbound call is directed to a voice browser for which a voice browsing session is already established.

More fundamentally, though, the inbound call is devoid of a signal for making any determination. The only determination to be made by Dinwoodie is whether to admit the caller into the auction site. But this determination is not made based upon the inbound call itself. Rather, it is made on the basis of the password and PIN provided by the caller via a "telephone input device."

Likewise, Dinwoodie nowhere teaches or suggests making the additional determination of whether or not a voice browser is configured to accept inbound calls associated with a calling signal. It is a given that the auction site is configured to accept multiple callers that each desire to submit competing bids; this is the nature of auction. The only determination for Dinwoodie is whether an individual caller is to be admitted to the auction site. But, again, this determination is not based on the inbound call itself. Instead, it is based upon the password and PIN provided by the caller.

It follows that Dinwoodie provides no mechanism for adding an inbound call to an already-established voice browsing session based on whether or not the inbound call is directed to a voice browser with which a voice browsing session has been established and on whether the voice browser is configured to accept inbound calls associated with the particular calling signal conveyed by the inbound call. Dinwoodie wholly fails to teach or suggest making either such determination. More fundamentally, Dinwoodie fails to teach or suggest any mechanisms comparable to those provided by Applicants' invention for making by which such determinations.

Accordingly, even when combined the cited references fail to teach or suggest every feature recited in amended independent Claims 1, 7, and 13. Applicants respectfully submit, therefore, that the claims define over the prior art. Applicants further respectfully submit that whereas the remaining claims each depend from one of Claims 1, 7, or 13 while reciting additional features, dependent Claims 2-6, 8-12, 14, and 16-19 likewise define over the prior art.

CONCLUSION

Applicants believe that this application is now in full condition for allowance, which action is respectfully requested. Applicants request that the Examiner call the undersigned if clarification is needed on any matter within this Amendment, or if the

Examiner believes a telephone interview would expedite the prosecution of the subject application to completion.

Respectfully submitted,

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